

2004 Report of Accomplishments

Pomeroy Conservation District



Natural Resource Improvements in 2004 - Summary

BMP Implementation for Erosion Reduction and Water Quality Improvement

Four funding sources were used this year to implement BMP practices to reduce upland erosion and improve the water quality of the streams within the Pomeroy CD. The funds used were the Conservation Commission Implementation Grant 04- 47-IM, Interagency for Outdoor Recreation, DOE, and BPA contract. #99BI19595. Under these cost share funding sources the following practices were implemented. The following soil savings is calculated using the Revised Universal Soil Loss Equation (RUSLE).

- No-till Seeding – 1, 483.8 acres at a cost of \$20,824 saving 6,114 tons of soil
- Direct Seeding – 1,487.6 acres at a cost of \$14,545 saving 7,278 tons of soil
- Pasture and Hayland Planting – 74.4 acres at a cost of \$1,525 saving 179 tons of soil
- Sediment Basins – 2 basins at a cost \$2,425

Our five year no-till program ended this year. Two participants had problems with the invasion of Rattail Fescue and some weeds that seem to be building a resistance to herbicides and were not able to finish the entire program. The invasion of these weeds and grasses continues to be a problem that several producers and alternative methods of control are being sought. A light cultivation seems to help control the Rattail Fescue and several farmers are using the two pass system rather than a complete no-till program.

The cost sharing of upland conservation practices is reducing each year because the board of supervisors placed a 3-year limitation on no-till and direct seed to better distribute the limited funding between operators. Many of the operators in our county have reached those limitations and are not eligible to receive further cost share for that practice. Even though our cost sharing of these practices has gone down, a majority of these farmers have adapted these practices into their regular farming operations. As new breakthroughs come about through research that address the problems listed above, new cost share may become available to those producers that have currently reached their limitation.



Mission of the Pomeroy Conservation District: To assist the farmers and ranchers of Garfield County with service, expertise, and funding to manage for the conservation, preservation and enhancement of natural resources within the Pomeroy Conservation District.

Water Quality Implementation

Livestock Influenced Water Quality The district continues to use the \$298, 000 in funding from the Department of Ecology received in the FY 2002 funding cycle. Half of this funding has been expended under 23 projects with livestock producers. This funding is being used to offset some of the costs associated with removing livestock winter-feeding and concentrated areas away from the stream. Over half of these projects were completed this last winter. It has been determined that water quality is being adversely affected by this feeding operations located adjacent to streams and the livestock operators are being asked to move these operations away from the stream corridor. Those projects are not CREP eligible or have large costs outside the CREP parameters, are seeking funding from the DOE grant to help with the costs of providing off site watering facilities, build fence, and plant trees. An additional DOE grant has been received to continue on with this program covering a broader spectrum of activities including addressing the problem of False Indigo invading the majority of the streams in the county.

DOE Conservation Corps The conservation district has utilized the DOE Conservation Corps in many of these projects. They constructed fence, built creek crossings, and helped install pipeline.

Basic Funding The basic funding received from the Legislature through the Conservation Commission pays for district operations not covered under grants obtained from BPA, DOE, SRFB, and others.



Local Funding

Agricultural Burning The Pomeroy CD works in cooperation with the Garfield County Commissioners in operating the burn program within the county. The County carries liability insurance for this program while the district works with the producer in the permit process. The county and district each contribute \$.315 per acre into a special account to cover the deductible part of a possible future claim. During the fiscal year 03, the district issued permits for 10,555 acres under 87 field permits. We also sold 27 spot permits.

Water Quality Monitoring The Pomeroy CD has been involved over the last 11 years in some kind of water quality monitoring. The program of water quality monitoring is to provide information on the effectiveness of the upland and riparian practices being implemented by the farmers and ranchers within the Pomeroy CD as it pertains to the water quality of the streams in Garfield County. The Pomeroy CD has contracted with Washington State University to do water quality monitoring for the last three years with funding provided from DOE Centennial Funds. Another grant was awarded to continue with the testing program. This DOE report is available from the district.

Professional Engineering We used our professional engineer, Lance Horning, in the engineering of several more livestock watering systems funded under the CREP and CCRP programs. He worked in cooperation with NRCS personnel.

Irrigation Metering Program The district received a \$52,500 grant from the Department of Ecology for the installation of 40 irrigation water usage meters this year. At the present time, 16 meters have been installed.

Community Collaboration & Coordination Over the years, a steady progression has occurred with the producers and citizens living inside the Pomeroy Conservation District. In the mid 80's when some funding became available from state and federal entities, the producers were reluctant to take part in any agreement, fearing a future conflict with a program that could change and not be of any benefit to them on their private property. Now that funding has been available for almost 15 years and the citizens and producers of Garfield County have seen what can be accomplished under these different programs, their feelings have changed. With this change in attitude, more conservation and restoration practices will be installed to protect and enhance our environment.

Information & Education The conservation district is actively involved in providing information and education to the producers of Garfield County. Newspaper articles are written on all newsworthy information that comes through the district. The district also publishes a newsletter periodically to keep the farmers and ranchers informed of funding opportunities available through the district for practice implementation and other activities of the district. The rainfall information from the 18 stations in the county is also collected, placed in a database and published in the newsletter. The district held its annual meeting in February in cooperation with the Garfield and Asotin County Crop Improvement Association. The conservation district operated and maintained the fish aquarium in the grade school. This is the 6th year of this program in our local school. This year, over 200 trout were hatched and released this year. They were released earlier than usual because of a pump failure.